

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121 the following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for facilitating a chat session between a first user and a second user visiting a first web site, comprising:

112 receiving, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user, a co-branded community to which the user belongs and an address of a first web site being visited by the first user; who receive

B receiving, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user, a second co-branded community to which the second user belongs and the address of the first web site;

providing, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID and the second co-branded community;

receiving, from the first user, a request to open ~~one of a public chat session, a semi-public chat session and a private chat session~~ with the second user;

transmitting, to the second user, an indication that the first user has requested ~~one of the public chat session, the semi-public chat session; and the private chat session; and~~

receiving, from the second user, an acceptance to enter the semi-public chat session ~~designated by the first user; and~~

at least one of the first user and the second user designating the semi-public chat session selectively visible.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the chat session may be continued when at least one of the first user and the second user disconnects from the first web site.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the providing step further comprises:

receiving, from the first user, a query for information regarding other users in a co-branded community visiting the first web site; and

searching a user database to determine which users in the co-branded community are visiting the first web site.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the query includes a request for other users having predetermined personal data including mood data.

5. (Currently Amended) A method for facilitating a real-time chat session between a first user and a second user, both visiting a first web server, the method comprising:

receiving, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user
and an address of the first web server;

receiving, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user and the address of the first web server;

providing, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID;
receiving, from the first user, a request to open a semi-public chat session
with the second user;
transmitting, to the second user, an indication that the first user has requested
the semi-public chat session; ~~and~~
receiving, from the second user, an acceptance to enter the semi-public chat
session designated by the first user; and
at least one of the first user and the second user designating the semi-public
chat session selectively visible.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the semi-public chat
session is visible only to users having a user profile predetermined by at least one of the first user,
second user, and other participants in the chat session.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, wherein the providing step further
comprises:

receiving, from the first user, a query for information regarding other users
visiting the first web site; and
searching a user database to determine which users are visiting the first web
site.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the query includes a request for other users having predetermined personal data.

9. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium encoded with processing instructions for implementing a method for facilitating a chat session between a first user and second user, both visiting a first web server, the method comprising:

receiving, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user and an address of the first web server;

receiving, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user and the address of the first web server;

providing, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID;

receiving, from the first user, a request to open a semi-public chat session with the second user;

transmitting, to the second user, an indication that the first user has requested the semi-public chat session; ~~and~~

receiving, from the second user, an acceptance to enter the semi-public chat session designated by the first user; and

at least one of the first user and the second user designating the semi-public chat session selectively visible.

10. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for facilitating a semi-public chat session between a first user and second user, both visiting a first web server, comprising:

a processor; and

a memory storing processing instructions for controlling the processor, the processor operative with the processing instructions to:

receive, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user and an address of the first web server;

receive, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user and the address of the first web server;

provide, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID;

receive, from the first user, a request to open a semi-public chat session with the second user;

transmit, to the second user, an indication that the first user has requested the semi-public chat session; and

receive, from the second user, an acceptance to enter the semi-public chat session designated by the first user; and

accept, from at least one of the first user and the second user, a designation
that the semi-public chat session is selectively visible.

11. (Currently Amended) A method for facilitating a communication between a first user and second user, both visiting a first web server, the method, comprising:

receiving, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user and an address of the first web server;

receiving, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user and the address of the first web server;

providing, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID; and

receiving, from the first user, a request to communicate with the second user in a semi-public chat session; and

at least one of the first user and the second user designating the semi-public chat session selectively visible.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, further comprising:

transmitting, to the second user, an indication that the first user has requested a communication; and

receiving, from the second user, an acceptance to receive a communication from the first user.

13. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium encoded with processing instructions for performing a method for facilitating a communication between a first user and second user, both visiting a first web server, the method comprising:

receiving, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user and an address of the first web server;

receiving, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user and the address of the first web server;

providing, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID; and

receiving, from the first user, a request to communicate with the second user in a semi-public chat session; and

at least one of the first user and the second user designating the semi-public chat session selectively visible.

B

14. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for facilitating a communication between a first user and second user, both visiting a first web server, the apparatus comprising:

a processor; and

a memory storing processing instructions for controlling the processor, the processor operative with the processing instructions to:

receive, from the first user, a first user ID corresponding to the first user and an address of the first web server;

receive, from the second user, a second user ID corresponding to the second user and the address of the first web server;

provide, to the first user, at least an indication of the second user ID;

receive, from the first user, a request to communicate with the second user;

and

provide to the second user an address for communicating with the second user in a semi-public chat session; and

accept, from at least one of the first user and the second user, a designation that the semi-public chat session is selectively visible.

15 (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the semi-public chat session is visible only to users having a user profile predetermined by at least one of the first user, second user, and other participants in the chat session.